TRAI have also stated that it is of utmost importance to ensure adequate quality of service in this fast growing segment of the market.

(c) The matter is presently under consideration.

Telephone facilities in rural areas

1583. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private operators or PSUs have failed to fulfil the commitment of providing telephone facilities in the rural areas;

(b) if so, the names of these companies and PSUs and assurances given by them to fulfil their commitment; and the status report as per their performances; and

(c) the details of the action taken/penalty imposed on other defaulters companies as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) M/s Tata Teleservices in Andhra Pradesh, M/s Reliance Telecom Ltd. in Gujarat M/s Hughes Telecom Ltd. in Maharashtra, M/s Shyam Telelink Ltd. in Rajasthan, M/s HFCL Infotel Ltd. in Punjab, M/s Bharti Telenet Ltd. in Madhya Pradesh have been directed to fulfil their roll out obligations by March 2003. M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) has planned to provide telecom facilities in the remaining villages of its share by 2003-04 except for those to be provided with the use of satellite media. The status of performance as on 31st January 2003 has been reported as per details given in Annexure. Statement (*See* below).

(c) The private basic telephone service providers have consistently been insisted upon to complete their unfulfilled performance obligations in respect of provision of VPTs as per their licence conditions. The Liquidated Damages provided in the licence conditions have been recovered for delay in performance. After getting chlearance from Security

angle. in the North-Eastern region and Jammu & Kashmir, BSNL has commenced the process for installation of Wireless in Local Loop equipment for providing Village Public Telephones.

Statement

Status of performance of BSNL etc. as on 31.1.2003 regarding number of VPTs provided

Name of the Company	Number of VPTs provided as on 31.1.2003
M/s Tata Teleservices	1314
M/s Reliance Telecom Ltd.	3764
M/s Hughes Telecom Ltd.	1127
M/s Shyam Telelink Ltd.	721
M/s HFCL Infotel Ltd.	830
M/s Bharti Telenet Ltd.	348
M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL)	504015

Merger of Hindustan Cables Ltd. and BSNL

1584. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan for merger of Hindustan Cables Ltd. with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount HCL has to pay to BSNL as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Rs. 280.07 crores (Rupees two hundred eighty crores seven lakhs only).